GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2698
ANSWERED ON:14.03.2016
Students Counselling System
Bidhuri Shri Ramesh;Dev Km. Sushmita;Gaikwad Prof. Ravindra Vishwanath;Mahadik Shri Dhananjay Bhimrao;Patel Shri Devji Mansingram;Satav Shri Rajeev Shankarrao;Sule Smt. Supriya Sadanand

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has noticed the recent cases of suicide by students studying in universities in the country;
(b) if so, the details thereof University-wise;
(c) whether the University Grants Commission (UGC) has written to all central universities to put in place a Students Counselling System for redressal of problems and challenges faced by them;
(d) if so, the details thereof and the response therefor; and
(e) the steps taken/being taken by the Government for safety of students on and off campuses?

Answer

MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
(SMT. SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI)

(a) to (b): Yes, Madam. Recently, one Ph.D Scholar in University of Hyderabad and another in Central University of Rajasthan have committed suicide. Data regarding State Universities is not maintained centrally.
(c) to (e): University Grants Commission (UGC) has formulated the Guidelines on safety of students on and off campuses of Higher Education Institutions and communicated to all Universities in April, 2015. The Guidelines are also uploaded on UGC website. The same were again reiterated and communicated to all Central Universities on 27th January, 2016. One of the important components of the guidelines is that all the Higher Educational Institutional should put in place a broad-based Student Counselling System for the effective redressal of problems and challenges faced by students. Besides this, it was also requested to all the Central Universities to create Student Counselling Centres in Universities and the Colleges where the services of a trained Psychologist may be used as and when required.
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UGC has also issued regulations/guidelines with regard to checking harassment and discrimination of all categories of students, promotion of equity, strengthening of grievance redressal system, elimination of ragging etc. in HEIs.
Education is a concurrent subject and the majority of Universities come under the purview of State Governments/Union Territory Administrations. Moreover, Central Universities are autonomous bodies which are governed by their own Acts, Statutes, Ordinances and Regulations made thereunder and they enjoy autonomy in all administrative and academic matters. They are competent to take decisions including to ensure safety of students on and off campuses.
A meeting with Vice Chancellors of the Central Universities was convened on 18th February, 2016 and the issues related to grievance redressal system, need of counseling of youth and sensitization of University administrators towards handling the issues faced by students etc. were discussed. The Vice Chancellors have, inter-alia, agreed to ensure a healthy, safe and congenial work environment for students, women, staff and faculty.
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